

Department of Public Health
and Human Services

Section:
APPLICATION PROCESSING

FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

Subject:
Authorized Representative

Supersedes: FS 103-7 (04/01/03)

References: 7 CFR 273.2(n), 273.2(n)(1); 273.2(n)(2); 273.2(n)(3); 273.2(n)(4); 273.2(4)(i)(C)

GENERAL RULE -- The Office of Public Assistance (OPA) shall inform households who indicate difficulty completing the application process that any responsible adult member of the food stamp household may authorize a representative to act on its behalf. An authorized representative may be designated for application processing purposes and may also carry out household responsibilities during the certification process such as reporting changes according to the household's reporting requirements. The same or a different representative may be authorized to obtain and use food stamp benefits for the household.

DEFINITION

An adult non-household member may be designated as an authorized representative if:

1. He/she is designated in writing by any responsible adult member of the household participating in the Food Stamp Program; and,
2. He/she is aware of relevant household circumstances.

If the only adult living with the household is not participating, such as a disqualified or an ineligible individual (coded 'DQ' or 'DS'), he/she may be the authorized representative for the minor household members.

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE RESTRICTIONS

The following restrictions apply to authorized representatives:

1. Employees involved in the certification and/or issuance processes may not act as authorized representatives;
2. Retailers authorized to accept food stamp benefits may not be an authorized representative without written approval from the OPA County Director. Retailers may be authorized only if it is determined no one else is available to be an authorized representative;
3. Homeless facilities providing meals (FS 0-4) may not act as authorized representatives for homeless food stamp households; and,

4. Individuals disqualified for Intentional Program Violation may not be an authorized representative during the disqualification period **unless** the individual is the only adult member of the household able to act on its behalf as determined by the OPA County Director.

DESIGNATING AN AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE FOR EBT

The primary information (PI) person of a food stamp case is sent a Montana Access Card (EBT). The food stamp authorized representative can also receive a card for the household. If an authorized representative exists for a case, the household must determine if the authorized representative should receive an EBT card.

If the authorized representative **should receive an EBT card for the household, the authorized representative's address (not the PI's address) must be entered in the FS BEN ADDRESS field on ADDR, AND the name must be recorded on the Authorized Rep/Protective Payee (AURP) screen.** An EBT card is issued automatically to any authorized representative listed on AURP. The authorized representative's card displays his/her name and a unique card number. Both cards have equal access to the food stamp benefits for the household.

If the authorized representative **should not receive an EBT card for the household, the authorized representative's name must not be entered on AURP.** The authorized representative's name **must** be documented in case notes as an 'information only' person. The heading, '**FS Authorized Representative**', is used for the subject line for easy identification.

OPA Case Managers **must not** enter the PI's name and address in the FS BEN ADDRESS fields on ADDR as a way to prevent the FS authorized representative listed on AURP from receiving a card because both the PI's card and the authorized representative's card will be mailed to the household's address. However, if a household has a need for two EBT cards, the other adult household member's name and address can be entered in the FS BEN ADDRESS fields on ADDR.

Example: Mom, dad, and two children. Dad is a long haul truck driver. The household has a need for two EBT cards. Dad needs a card to purchase food while he is on the road, and Mom needs a card to purchase food for the household.

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**≥DEACTIVATING
EBT CARD FOR
AUTHORIZED
REPRESENTATIVE**

If the authorized representative is not included in the food stamp household, any adult food stamp household member can call the EBT Customer Service phone number and request to have the authorized representative's EBT card deactivated. The EBT Customer Service Representative will deactivate the authorized representative's EBT card.

If the authorized representative is included in the food stamp household, another household member cannot deactivate the authorized representative's EBT card.

**DISQUALIFICATION
OF AN AUTHORIZED
REPRESENTATIVE**

An individual may be disqualified from participating as an authorized representative in the Food Stamp Program for up to one year when the authorized representative misrepresented the household's circumstances and knowingly provided false information pertaining to the household, or improperly used the household's benefits. Adequate written notification must be sent to the affected household and to the authorized representative 30 days prior to the date of disqualification.

Households should be advised they are held responsible for over issuances resulting from erroneous information provided by their authorized representative.

**SIGNATURE ON
THE APPLICATION**

The individual signing the application attests under penalty of perjury to the citizenship or alien status of each of the household members. Any responsible adult member of the food stamp household or the authorized representative is permitted to sign the application.

NOTE: Only one signature is required on the application.

In the absence of any responsible adult member in the food stamp household, a legal guardian for any member of the household may sign the application. If there is no legal guardian appointed, the authorized representative may sign the application. The authorized representative shall be required to present all required documentation and other verification requested of the household.

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